

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. A disposable diaper comprising a liquid permeable topsheet, a liquid impermeable backsheet, a liquid retentive absorbent member interposed between the topsheet and the backsheet, a pair of longitudinal side portions and a pair of longitudinal  
5 end sections,

a fastening tape provided on each side edge of one of the longitudinal end sections thereof and a laterally extensible side part provided on each side area of a below-waist portion of the longitudinal end section having the fastening tapes, and standing gathers provided in each of the longitudinal side portions thereof, wherein

10 a region R having the absorbent member in a crotch section disposed therein having a low stiffness region R1 having a flexural stiffness of 25 gf/50 mm or less in the width direction of the diaper,

the standing gathers being formed by fixing an elastic member having a fixing extension ratio of 100% or higher, and

15 the standing gathers on each longitudinal side portion having tensile characteristics, which as measured in a state of the gathers not being fixed to the diaper, wherein the tensile load required to extend the standing gathers to an effective extension ratio which is 30% lower than a fixing extension ratio, is from 20 to 120 gf, and the rate of increase of the tensile load required to extend from an extension ratio of 20% up to  
20 the effective extension ratio is 1.0 gf/% or lower.

2. The disposable diaper according to claim 1, wherein the region R comprises a high stiffness region R2 having a width of at least 50 mm across the diaper and a flexural stiffness of 25 gf/50 mm or higher in the width direction of the diaper.

25 3. The disposable diaper according to claim 1, wherein the low stiffness region R1 exists along each longer side edge of the diaper in the region R.

4. The disposable diaper according to claim 1, wherein the extensible side parts each have a natural length of 20 mm or more as measured in the width direction of the diaper in a state being removed from the diaper and contracted, and the tensile characteristics of the extensible side parts are such that, when the fastening tapes are pulled apart in the width direction of the diaper to extend the extensible side parts, the tensile load at a middle extension length is from 30 to 300 gf.

5. The disposable diaper according to claim 1, wherein the width of the crotch section as its smallest width is from 100 to 240 mm.

6. The disposable diaper according to claim 1, wherein two portions on opposite sides of a centerline dividing the length of the diaper in equal halves have a saturated absorption capacity ratio of from 45/55 to 55/45.

7. A disposable diaper for babies and infants comprising a liquid permeable topsheet, a liquid impermeable backsheet, a liquid retentive absorbent member interposed between the topsheet and the backsheet, and a fastening tape provided on each side edge of one of a pair of longitudinal end sections thereof and having a pair of standing gathers and a pair of leg gathers each formed by fixing respective elastic members in each of a pair of longitudinal side portions thereof, wherein

a smallest width of the crotch section is 100 to 240 mm,

a ratio of a distance W11 between a pair of fixed ends of the pair of standing gathers measured at the smallest width of a crotch section to a distance W12 between each elastic member that is arranged most outward in each of the respective leg gathers, and with both distances being measured at the smallest width of the crotch section, W11/W12, is from 0.67 to 0.81,

a distance W13 between each of the fixed ends of the pair of standing gathers and each of the elastic members that are arranged most outward in the pair of leg gathers as measured at the smallest width of the crotch section is smaller than a width W14 of the standing gathers on each side as measured at the smallest width of the crotch section,

the standing gathers being formed by fixing an elastic member having a fixing extension ratio of 100% or higher, and

the standing gathers on each longitudinal side portion having tensile

characteristics, which as measured in a state of the gathers not being fixed to the diaper, wherein the tensile load required to extend the standing gathers to an effective extension ratio, which is 30% lower than a fixing extension ratio is from 20 to 120 gf, and the rate of increase of the tensile load required to extend from an extension ratio of 20% to the effective extension ratio is 1.0 gf/% or lower.

8. The disposable diaper according to claim 7, wherein the ratio  $W11/W12$  is in the range of from 0.67 to 0.81 over an area extending at least 50 mm in a length direction of the diaper.

9. The disposable diaper according to claim 7, wherein the distance  $W13$  is smaller than the width  $W14$  over an area extending at least 50 mm in a length direction of the diaper.

10. A disposable diaper comprising a liquid permeable topsheet, a liquid impermeable backsheet, a liquid retentive absorbent member interposed between the topsheet and the backsheet, and a fastening tape provided on each side edge of one of a pair of the longitudinal end sections thereof, and a landing zone where the fastening tape can be fixed on an outer side of the other longitudinal end section of the pair, and a laterally extensible side part provided on each side area of a below-waist portion of the longitudinal end section having the fastening tapes, wherein

a tensile load required to extend the below-waist portion of the longitudinal end section having the fastening tapes in the diaper width direction to an extension ratio that is 30% lower than a maximum extension ratio is from 80 to 500 gf,

a smallest width of a crotch section of the diaper is from 100 to 240 mm, and

a region having the absorbent member in the crotch section has a flexural stiffness of from 3 to 25 gf/50 mm in a width direction of the diaper.

11. The disposable diaper according to claim 10, wherein the crotch section possesses a width that is in a range of from 100 to 240 mm in an area extending at least 50 mm in a length direction of the diaper.

12. The disposable diaper according to claim 10, which weighs from 20 to 40 g.

13. The disposable diaper according to claim 10, wherein two portions on opposite sides of a centerline dividing the length of the diaper in equal halves have a saturated absorption capacity ratio of from 45/55 to 55/45.

5 14. A method of diapering a wearer in a standing position with a disposable diaper comprising a liquid permeable topsheet, a liquid impermeable backsheet and a liquid retentive absorbent member interposed between the topsheet and the backsheet and having a fastening tape provided on each side edge of one of a pair of longitudinal end sections thereof, a landing zone where the fastening tape can be fixed on the outer side of the other longitudinal end section, and a laterally extensible side part provided on 10 each side area of the below-waist portion of the longitudinal end section having the fastening tapes, wherein

a smallest width of the crotch section is from 100 to 240 mm, and a region having the absorbent member in the crotch section has a bending stiffness of from 3 to 25 gf/50 mm in a width direction of the diaper,

15 the method comprising the steps of putting the disposable diaper between a standing wearer's legs, pulling up the disposable diaper to the wearer's crotch so that the diaper is retained to the crotch and fixing the fastening tapes onto the landing zone while the diaper is retained to the crotch.